# MEDICAL ESSAYS.

By J. HUNGERFORD SEALY, M.D.E. A.B.T.C.D.

## No. II.

# THE IMAGINATION:

## ITS HISTORY AND EFFECTS ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BODY IN HEALTH AND DISEASE.

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J. HUNGERFORD SEALY,

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"In every process of reasoning there are two distinct objects of attention, or circumstances, to be examined, before we admit the validity of the argument. These are,—the premises or data which the reasoner assumes, and which he expects us to admit as true;—and the conclusions which he proposes to found upon these premises."

Dr. ABERCROMBIE *on the Intellectual Powers.*

LONDON:

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1837.

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# THE IMAGINATION,

## ITS HISTORY AND EFFECTS ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BODY IN HEALTH AND DISEASE.

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TO

JONAS MORRIS SEALY, ESQ.,

AS A SMALL TRIBUTE

OF

AFFECTION AND ADMIRATION

OF

HIS VARIOUS POWERS

AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MIND,

THIS BRIEF HISTORY

OF

THE IMAGINATION,

IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS ATTACHED BROTHER,

J. HUNGERFORD SEALY.

*Bath, May*, 1837.

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# PREFACE.

TEN years having elapsed since the first publication of this Essay, as an inaugural thesis for my degree of Doctor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, I now offer it to the profession and the public, in the English language, with such additions, alterations, and corrections, as my reading, reflection, and observation have enabled me to make and collect. Within that time the industry and intellect of Europe have effected much for science in all its departments, physical nature has been ransacked, and scarce a corner of existence left unexplored. And what has been the result?

an attainment of knowledge unexampled in the history of man, an ingenuity and boldness of hypothesis unprecedented, amounting almost to the erection of new sciences, and an expansion of intellectual apprehension unthought of in the antecedent world. With such examples before us, then, it is impossible to place a limit to intellectual research and human contrivance; and, thanks to the light of reason, the force of prejudice is withdrawn, which made enquiry a crime, and discovery a source of punishment. The promulgations of Galileo and Harvey, of Gall and Spurzheim, of Mesmer and Hannhemann, of Schelling and Crosse*, are all now

* See the account of the British Association, at Bristol, last year, in which the deductions from this gentleman's experiments and observations were the most extraordinary ever recorded. He expressed his conviction, that it was possible, by a human exertion, to make diamonds.

appreciated and permitted as just subjects for enquiry and intellectual consideration. The school-master, which Lord Brougham declared to be abroad, has laid aside his ferule of office as unworthy the rapid march of intellect; and, seizing the huntsman's "horn of chase," has hastened on in pursuit of that flying game—"Truth," whose evasive coils in all her haunts he has nearly unravelled.

When I declare my conviction that mind, thought, or intellect, in its mortal condition, is a secretion, an immaterial product of a material organization, I do it with a feeling of confidence that, however much I may offend the prejudices and vanity of a few, I shall receive from the honest and intellectual many a fair hearing, and not be condemned unex-

amined. The arguments which I have adduced in favour of this idea, are to myself conclusive. Vanity, I am aware, is the main impediment to its universal reception, which will not permit self-sufficient man to esteem himself as linked with the animal world, but makes him suppose that he enjoys some attribute of the Deity. That there is a portion of divinity within us, I wish not to deny; and that that is the portion which will survive our bodies, I firmly believe; but that it is not thought, or ordinary mind, is to me clear from a belief in the justness of Providence, who would not make such a variety in the immortal portion of men, as we know to exist in their intellects. Again, we see, in the whole chain of animal life, as well as in the individuals of each

class, intellect depending upon cerebral development; consequently, we must suppose intellect to be the product of that organization; and if a product, why not a secretion? Mr. Colquhoun, in his lectures at Edinburgh, recently published in Dr. Ryan's *London Medical and Surgical Journal*, talks with supreme contempt of those philosophical materialists; who, as he says, consider man "a mere machine endowed with corporial organs which *secrete mind*, as the liver secretes bile." Mr. Colquhoun is, however, no physiologist; and, in my mind, a very bad reasoner; for it unfortunately happens that we do not know how the liver secretes bile, nor how any other gland acts, nor even the ultimate arrangement of their parenchyma. We only know that such and such secretions

come from them, are eliminated from the blood by them, as bile from the liver, saliva from the salivary glands, &c. And surely nobody will deny that mind, thought, or intellect comes from the brain less certainly, than bile from the liver, &c. We cannot demonstrate it after death, it is true; for, being an immaterial invisible existence, it is incapable of exhibition; besides that, with the cessation of life it ceases to manifest itself; and, enclosed within an impenetrable curtain, as the brain is, we can never form an idea of its operation during life. It is true that, on an examination after death, we perceive a variety of appearances in the brain; to those we have given different denominations, some prominences, and some cavities; but of the operation of each and all of

these during life, we know nothing, nor ever can, except by their fruit, which is the mind. Mr. Colquhoun, likewise, seems to fancy that, by expressing his ridicule of such notions, he deserves to be ranked as the advocate of true religion against its defamers. I do not, myself, see that it is any question concerning religion at all, considered in the light I view it; for there can be no future expectation for the terminable mind, and the interminable soul, I should hope, is independent of all casualties.

In this Essay I have endeavoured to reduce my ideas of Imagination to the test of common sense, and preserved a *juste milieu* in the enquiry between metaphysics and practical medicine. I have, likewise adverted to the doctrines

of the Phrenologists and Animal Magnetizers, both of whose promulgations are deserving of the utmost consideration. The cases I have adduced are all attested; and I trust the view I have set forth of the great powers of the Imagination, and the importance of its culture and direction, will find an echo in the bosoms of each and all my readers.

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# THE IMAGINATION.

In writing the History of the Imagination, many difficulties arise from many different causes. The 1st, and, perhaps, the most formidable, is, that, for the proper comprehension of the subject, we are obliged to appeal to the very faculty of mind itself, the operation of which, by the exertion of our own, we wish to unravel; and, according as that to which we appeal, is more or less in a state of natural or acquired excitement or development, is the subject considered; mental Anatomy having this one difficulty over that of the Physical

Science, that it is a home operation, confined in its researches to the mind of the investigator, all others being inscrutable. Again, according to the expansion or dilatability of the understanding, or that portion of it to which we appeal, is the amplitude of the subject admitted; some considering the Imagination as the mere power of mental conception, and being to thought, what creation is to matter; while others again, devoid of that faculty, look on it as the effect of nervous excitability, and, in some measure, at all times connected with disease.

In both these forms we wish to consider it, conceiving that one is the mere modification of the other, and both the effect of physical organization, modified and developed by circumstances.

That few are ungifted with this power, we also imagine, although not equally so; yet that there are none in whom under particular modifications, it cannot be developed in some form or other, we are well convinced from experience. As this general assumption of a faculty which is so usually ascribed to a few gifted individuals, and looked on as an intellectual endowment, destined for a peculiar function, to avoid misconception, I shall endeavour, as briefly as possible, to delineate the several forms under which it presents itself, and define its modifications to support my assertion.

The Imagination may then, I conceive, be divided into two heads, which I shall consider under the denominations of Healthy and Unhealthy.

Healthy Imagination is that faculty

of mind which presides over the active effort of thought, and may be divided into two partitions for the convenience of consideration—namely, into Mental Creation and Conception. These are two different efforts of intelligence, each equally active, but perfectly distinct in their vocations. Mental Creation is to thought, what Divine Creation is to matter, and is a much rarer gift than Conception, which is the observation and appliance of resemblances, and adaptation of fitnesses, so conjoining into a united whole what previous Creation had produced. Mental Creation is an exceedingly rare gift, so rare as, by many not supposed to exist among men, but to be the characteristic attribute of the Deity, who is himself as omniscient, and omnipresent, the best type of the faculty, as

an unembodied all-pervading thought—

> " Pervading Nature, riding on the wind,
> Filling the elsewise vacant void of space,
> And seeing all things, yet himself unseen."

In the entire range of literature, there is perhaps scarce a single instance of pure mental creation, unless we could ascribe such to the Mosaic descriptions, which, according to the late Baron Cuvier, are the oldest written documents extant. From what sources, celestial or mundane, he derived his accounts of things immaterial, and localities invisible to mortal eyes, it is for us neither to speculate on, or question ; yet even these bear a certain resemblance to earthly realities, so as to lead us to suppose that they were more the arrangement of previous records, or the conception of pre-existing realities, than either the trans-

mitted visions of Divinity, or the creations of his own mind. We are told that Moses was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians ; consequently, he was well acquainted with all the information, traditional or recorded, which preceded or existed in his time. From whatever source he derived his information, it is pretty clear that, to his accounts afforded in the Pentateuch, under different forms and conditions, amongst the sacred and profane writers and poets, we owe the various descriptions of unrealities and immaterialities, from the Sanscrit to Dante inclusive ; serving to show that, in not one of those multifarious imaginative writers, has the pure faculty of mental creation existed, but that their utmost effort has been the adaptation of previously recorded ideas.

Conception is that division of the mental faculty denominated Imagination, to which then we owe all our imaginative powers ; it consists in drawing, from experience and observation, ideas and deductions, and combining and arranging them into a perfect whole, so as to bear a new appearance. This, when garbed in language, is called poetry and romance; under other forms it likewise supplies the painter, the sculptor, and the mechanist; and is, perhaps, the most valuable property of mind. It is, difficult to trace this nice distinction of mental labour, and many will, I doubt not, be unwilling to accord the premises, deeming it derogatory to suppose such an absence of originality ; but let such caviller for a moment examine the works of the first poets, paint-

ers, and sculptors, which earth has ever produced, are not their ideas all of earth, earthly? Shew me one who can imagine an immaterial essence, or even a new form. Virgil, Dante, and Milton represented their angels and spirits in human form, and Raphael painted the Deity as an aged man. Immaterial existences are necessarily incapable of being considered except in a material form, but yet mental exertion has never yet even attempted for that a new appearance, nor aught for which early realities have not at any rate afforded the nucleus of the thought. It is then to conception, or the power of conceiving, and so enabling the mind to re-clothe and represent existing ideas, not to mental creation, that we owe our present exercise of Imagination. It is

by metaphysical writers, divided into many heads, the most valuable of which, in a literary point of view, next to rapidity of perception, is arrangement; and as this healthy exercise of the faculty is more particularly interesting as a question of literary application, I hope I shall be indulged for a little detail in this department of my subject.

Rapidity of perception, according to Locke, constitutes wit; it is the perception of resemblances, the mental consciousness that two apparently remotely allied ideas bear, in a certain position, a peculiar resemblance, which, as originally observed by one individual, and pointed out to others, gains him the credit of being possessed of rapidity of perception: this, associated with language, constitutes a poet; with language and

arrangement, which enables the possessor to preserve the resemblances to nature, constitutes the romancer and novelist. Arrangement is that faculty by which those resemblances are disposed so as to constitute a whole, bearing a similitude to nature, and constituting a picture which nature might have formed without disturbing her unity. It is the most useful faculty to the depictors of imaginary positions in modern times, the dramatis personæ of whose conceptions are deduced from realities. Of modern writers the most remarkable for this faculty was the late Sir Walter Scott; it was this wonderful gift in him, coupled with memory, which constituted his powers: his dramatis personæ are all pre-supposed to exist, and his positions all probable.

In this he has followed his great prototype, Shakspeare, whose mind seems to have been pretty similarly constituted. Some will perhaps ask, is not the assumption of a position, even though it be deduced from the probabilities of nature, a mental creation? Is not the assumed existence and detailed events of the life of an imaginary personage, as the Falstaff of Shakspeare, or the Waverley of Sir Walter Scott, a mental creation? To a certain extent perhaps it is; but it is so deduced from surrounding appliances, that the effort necessary for it, when fully considered, must cease to be looked on as a creation, and be viewed solely as the application of existing resemblances in a new position; and the gift, or talent, as it is called, lies not in the creation of a new

material, but in the adaptation of one already formed.

Such I conceive to be the metaphysical view of the mental endowment denominated Imagination, which I have divided into two heads, namely, mental creation and conception. The phrenologists subdivide it still more, or rather apportion to the generally received faculty, as necessary for the constitution of what is denominated a literary genius, distinct and different departments of the brain, discernible by external manifestations, the principal of which is, or should be, *ideality*, which I think they have curiously enough placed amongst their *moral feelings*, instead of the *intellectual*. The internal mental gift is by them supposed to be externally manifested by a longitudinal prominence

nearly over the *squamous suture*, and so defined, according to their allocation, as to belong to no distinguishable form under heaven. To speak geographically, it is bounded on the North by *marvellousness* and *hope;* anteriorly, or the West, by *wit;* posteriorly, or the East, by an angle of *cautiousness;* and inferiorly, or South, by *acquisitiveness*. The other organs of their vocabulary, which are supposed to enter into the constitution of an imaginative being, are—*order*, *time*, *number*, *language*, *comparison*, *wit*, and *imitation*, which they have so huddled together above and around the eyes, as to render them truly the "windows of the soul." Having the highest respect for this numerous and intellectual body, the Phrenologists, and feeling deeply imbued with the

sentiment, that the mental gifts are, to a vast extent, discernible in the cranial development, the amplitude of what all observers and physiologists, before Gall and Spurzheim were ever heard of, admitted to be the intellectual portion of the cerebral mass, namely, the anterior or frontal portion, I should be sorry to be supposed by these observations to throw ridicule on their labours and ingenious deductions, they have, on the contrary, I am convinced, done science a great deal of good; and in directing attention to the more minute anatomy of the brain, have served that science materially. It is, I must be allowed to add, to the nicety of their distinctions that I would object, as affording a supposition that the peculiar faculties or attributes of mind which

they have severally named, reside exclusively within the most finely divided boundaries of the portions allocated to them ; which must be in a certain degree arbitrary ; and which, in conjunction in many intellects, cannot be so far apart as this allocation would lead us to suppose. Again, some of the most active faculties are confined to the narrowest limits ; such for instance as *language*, which is placed on the summit of the eye ; which organ, as having nothing to say to the mental faculty, but being merely protruded by the cerebral development in the upper wall of the orbit, must be a very confined locality for so important a gift. Besides, the eye itself bears such a variety of shapes, that it must be very hard indeed to distinguish

that prominence produced by cerebral and consequent orbital projection, from those of peculiar formation of the globe itself. Again, we may fairly be allowed to ask what is meant by the term *language*, or, more properly speaking, the *organ of language?* Is it, to use the metaphysical phrase, the faculty of acquiring languages, or the faculty of expressing mental impressions in the most beautiful clothing? And even this, mentally considered, admits of a vast variety. The orator, nay, even the novelist, is not always a poet, as we know from record, that the celebrated Mrs. Inchbald* could not write one line of verse; and, in her dramas was necessitated to have the songs composed by other authors. In my own

* See Taylor's Records of his own Life and Times.

experience, many of those gifted with the poetic capability, have or have had oblong eyes, such as those of many living poets; and which the two greatest, by all accounts, had in a peculiar degree, namely, Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley. That the phrenological allocation of genius, or more properly speaking, peculiar mental endowment, to that portion of the frontal development extending laterally, is correct, my own experience and observation leads me to concur. I mean that rather extensive sub-divided portion lying at either side of that band of organs* advancing over the summit of the cranium, which they have designated *veneration* and *benevolence.* This range of double organs they have divided and named thus:—*Wit,*

* See De Ville's Casts.

*ideality*, *marvellousness*, *imitation*, and *hope*. It is a pretty considerable space, and, in my own experience, when well developed, has never failed to be accompanied by the corresponding intellectuality, and generally under the complicated designations laid down ; how far it may be capable of such nice partition, or whether the ingenious nomenclators have ever been able to observe a development of one, with a nullity in cranial formation of the other, I cannot pretend to say. In my own experience, metaphysically speaking, I have met with many highly gifted with powers of imitation, very little given to the marvellous ; *marvellousness*, on the contrary, borders much on *ideality*, which, phrenologically speaking, it joins, both of which are described as moral feelings ;

and both of which appear to me to be higher intellectual efforts than *imitation*. which is the power of representing existing impressions, and requiring no originality.

To the actor and the painter of nature, this organ is of most importance ; it is that faculty by which they are supposed to be enabled to imitate or copy existing appearances or realities in nature. In some of the higher departments of imitation, however, the faculty is coupled with ideality, such as in painting or acting from literal descriptions, as in Mr. Martin's illustrations of Milton, &c., and Mr. Kean's, &c., conceptions of the characters of Shakspeare, &c. But of this division of ideality or modification of mental creation, I shall speak more in detail in investigating the different degrees and

merits of authorship. The organ of *marvellousness*, is an organ likewise of vast importance to the romancer; it is placed by the phrenologist in the centre, between *ideality*, *hope*, *imitation*, and *wit*, or, more properly speaking, it is bounded by those organs, and perhaps mentally speaking, correctly. As a mental faculty, it borders much upon ideality and wit, deriving from the former, and lending the brightest sparks to the latter. It is the organ by which a taste for the marvellous, or an inclination to receive and imbibe every account of unearthly things is supplied, which, if not antagonized, or opposed by *cautiousness*, would leave its possessor miserably a prey to superstition and delusion. Thus far I have thought it necessary to particularize a few of

the internal or intellectual faculties, blended into, in popular *parlance*, the general term—mind—and believed by a large and learned body to be, externally, distinctly characterised. I must again beg leave to creep behind the *curtain* of the *cranium*, and endeavour to investigate the faculties of intellect, leaving out of view the material form and nice peculiarities, and in this a difficulty exists, which I have before stated—namely, the impossibility of examining any mind but my own, except those which have become to a certain degree known to us by their writings.

To lay aside then the phrenological nice distinctions and designations, and instead of speaking of *ideality* and *marvellousness* being held in check by *cautiousness*, and *combativeness* and

*destructiveness* by *benevolence*, we shall consider them, as they have been considered of old by that learned body, the Metaphysicians, whose views and descriptions, when steering clear of some few mysticisms, are equally remarkable for lucidity and depth.

The Imagination then, in the wide sense of the word, is that compound quality or faculty of mind, supposed to be understood by every one; yet, which each and every one would find it impossible to define. Such a person is denominated a person of imagination, he or she writes verses, or writes a book in prose or verse of a particular class. The writer of a romance is styled an imaginative writer, while the writer of a history is not so. Mr. Martin is styled an imaginative painter; while

Claude is not so. In these labourers, however, what is the distinction? Women are considered more imaginative than men ; and young people, than those more advanced. Disease also which decreases the powers of the body, frequently increases those of the imagination. Certain articles of diet and medicines likewise have the same effect. Certain nations have likewise peculiarly developed powers of this class ; and certain professions and avocations heighten or depress it. As my business at present is with it in a healthy state, I shall merely consider it as such, with its origin and development ; and then speak of its effects and powers, as the source and remedy of disease. Having divided my *consideration* of it into two departments, which I have denominated

Healthy and Unhealthy ; and looking on the healthy Imagination, for the most part, in a literary point of view, I have sub-divided it into two others—namely, Mental Creation and Conception, which I have already defined. I shall now look a little more extendedly at it, as it is generally understood.

In usual *parlance*, then, the Imagination is put in opposition to judgment, which is a complex faculty, according to the Phrenologists, formed of *cautiousness*, *comparison*, *causality*, and *firmness ;* according to Locke, the power of observing differences and separating truth from delusion. I have likewise said that none are totally void of it. I shall now, in order to avoid misconception, endeavour, as clearly as I can, to define it ; separating it from the other

faculties of the mind, so to be comprehensible.

In opposition to judgment, it may, perhaps, with propriety be placed; as judgment certainly is the faculty which tempers the delusions of fancy; restrains the wild flights of excited feeling; and forms the criterion of sanity or insanity. If an individual declares he has seen a vision, and at the same time admits that he is conscious it is a mental delusion, he is sane; although suffering from a diseased or over-excited imagination. If he confesses that he thinks it a real existence, he is mad. The healthiest and soundest imaginations are sometimes subject to delusions; and the consciousness that they are mental spectra, is what constitutes the absence

of permanent physical disease. The Imagination in Scripture is taken as the mind generally ; or, more properly speaking, the active inclination, as in this passage—" The Imagination of every man's heart is wicked continually." By this is meant, that the desire of the natural man is to indulge his appetite, if unrestrained by other motives. There is however in other passages, another and deeper meaning ascribed to the term, which consists either in the mental prehension, or anticipation of an unexisting gratification, or the revival of a past one ; and the indulgence in which is declared to be as culpable as the material reality. As in this passage—-" Whoso looketh upon a woman to lust with her, committeth adultery already in his heart." Again,

meditated revenge, cupidity, &c., even though not within the reach of attainment, are yet as culpable as if they were so. These are truly the sins of Imagination, ideal commissions, which we can suppose the human race alone are capable of. In the lower animals we have no reason to imagine that the mental feeling arises previous to the exciting cause being presented to the sense; we can conceive one of the lower animals suffering from hunger when kept long without food, but we cannot imagine them regaling in anticipation on an assurance being conveyed to them of an immediate supply. In the human race the mind or the imagination frequently requires not the presence of the gratifying material; it receives the impression collaterally, and

perceiving, perhaps, some remote resemblance, re-dresses and shapes it to the mould of its own wishes. Thus, an affectionate husband and father, absent from his home and family, musing in his solitary apartment, traces a resemblance in the fire to some loved face; it wakes a chord, and imagination bears him back, and revives forgotten feelings. From the accidental supposition of one resemblance, others arise, until to his delighted view, as palpably felt, the the whole group are presented. Again, the epicure, the voluptuary, &c., all feed upon occasionally unsubstantial joys—

"Awake but one, and lo! what myriads rise.'

This is not memory—it is not the recalling of forgotten pleasures or joys; it is their mental conception; the best

illustration of which, perhaps, is in what is denominated, in vulgar *parlance*, "Castle building." A visionist commences by thinking of what he should do, if such and such events happened; he lays out schemes; he constructs designs; he travels on in thought, and adds to each erection, until after a time he believes them all real; and then revelling in the enjoyment of his own fabrications, he shuts out matter of fact, until some rude shock of the external world disrobes his vision, and sends him shivering back to the cold world of nature. This is Imagination verging on disease, and yet not entirely diseased. Or if it be disease, who is there subject to it, who would wish to be debarred of it? To it do not some of the clearest minds, the most

tempered judgments, owe some of their sweetest hours? Is it not this wandering of fancy—this "fairy frost work" of the mind, which colours the dull plain of existence; opening an *oasis* here and there, where all would otherwise be barren?

In literary life we must again recur to this faculty, and trace its varieties. In this department of intellectual labour, it is looked on as the faculty by which unreal existences are introduced and clad as real. An imaginary existence is assumed; and to illustrate character or circumstances, incidents are supposed, and an imaginary path created. Along this the hero is made to move, and wearing the form of a human being, the events of his existence are recorded; and during the

perusal of them, if the artist is clever, the reader sees no difference between fact and fiction; between its detail, as a matter of history or romance.

Looked on generally as this faculty is, such as I have just described it, and viewed by few in any other light; it will, I doubt not, to most appear incongruous to be told, that so far from being solely the organ of visionary conception, it is the main spring of existence, and the most valuable faculty of mind; that to it are owed, as much the inductive philosophy of Bacon, and the discoveries of Galileo and Harvey, as the amusing details of Don Juan or Vivian Grey. Strange as this may appear, it is no less true. It was this faculty of mind which enabled the immortal Bacon to perceive inductions

from certain premises; to conclude results from certain data; portions of which were only presented to his mind's eye; and those dispersed and irregular. I may be asked, how can that be? His views were the effect of experiment. True. But, what faculty of mind induced him to institute those experiments? What led him on from one to the other, anticipating in his own mind results, and establishing, by experiment, what theory had conceived? It was Imagination. That perceptive rapidity of thought which enabled him to grasp and unite resemblances, and transform probabilities into realities. His directions were not, as is too generally supposed—let every research but experimental be discarded—but let every theory which experiment does

not verify be cautiously received ;* and, in like manner, with Galileo and Harvey, it was mental calculation in both that laid the train of enquiry which experiment and experience verified. Such then, is Imagination in the full and correct sense of the word. It is the active principle of mind ; the executive element, which conjoined with judgment and memory, makes up the reflective agent, which particularly distinguishes rational man. I have said that none are totally deficient in this faculty ; although in its developement a vast variety exists. I shall now view it in detail, and consider its differences ; showing how far it is modified by circumstances, by education, and by habits of life.

* See Herschell's Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy.

That the developement, nay, almost the existence of imagination, is under the guidance of circumstances, I think all must admit; we see it constantly so unexpectedly manifested, we see the necessity of mental exertion for bodily support, so often produce most unequivocal evidence of its existence, where recently the supposition of its existence even to the individuals themselves was not harboured: this is evidenced in the cases of some of our best writers That the Imagination is susceptible of developement and expansion from education, none, I think, who have exercised it, will deny, and that peculiar casualties demonstrate it, I shall fully exhibit when I come to the second partition of my subject, namely the unhealthy state of the function.—

In this view of it then, I may be asked perhaps—is imagination synonymous with mind generally, or only a portion of it? to which I beg to state as I have already done, that laying aside all metaphysical and phrenological technicalities and distinctions, I consider it to be the active principle of mind, the main ingredient, which memory assists, and judgment tempers. If so, I may again be asked—if all are possessed of this imagination, how comes it to pass that all do not manifest it? that all are not poets, novellists, &c., that even amongst those evincing a certain developement of the faculty, that such a variety of determinations of it are found, or tastes, as they are called? to which I readily reply, that external circumstances afford a bias, which internal

disposition is not always able to overcome; as, for instance, the son of a painter may have all the elements of a poet within him, and yet from the circumstances of his father's vocation, never turn his mind to clothe his bright ideas in verse, but rather be led to engarb them in the delineations of the pencil. That nature does apportion mental tendencies however, I wish not to deny; and that it is a wise precept to cultivate what the inclination suggests, as phrenology inculcates, I fully admit; but that circumstances determine disposition, I think all must concede. That Paganini would have made as good a General as a *Fiddler*, I wont take upon me to say, but that, by all accounts, only for peculiar circumstances, over which he had no con-

trol, he never would have been a *Fiddler*, report testifies. That his cerebral and mental developement would have made him a distinguished individual in any department of life, to which he had sedulously and unremittingly devoted himself, I think all will allow.

> "That men are the sport of circumstances, when,
> Circumstances seem the sport of men,"

a distinguished individual has attested, and which sentiment, few, I think, will be hardy enough to dispute. If we analyze the history of the lives of the most distinguished individuals which modern times have given rise to in their different walks in life, and carefully institute comparisons between their intellectual endowments, we shall, I think, not find so great a difference in their mental construction, as

their allotted destinations in life would lead superficial observers to imagine; the careful investigator will perceive, that it was the same vigour of intellect, the same prehensile perception of resemblances, and almost procreative faculty of thought, which made Napoleon the general, Lord Byron the poet, and Cuvier, the naturalist, modified by circumstances. Such is imagination, or the active principle of mind in its healthy state.

I shall now turn to it in its other form, which I have denominated Unhealthy; and in that department of my subject shall view it in its fourfold capacity—namely, in its effects on the body in health and disease; and as a source of disease and cure.

In this consideration of my subject,

I must beg to look at it in another and a new light, which by many, I doubt not, will meet with opposition. I shall look at it merely as the result of physical organization, the peculiar immaterial elimination of material conformation; and in this I so far announce myself a materialist, as to express my inability to comprehend life or the vital principle, during its existence on earth, except as in connexion with and produced by physical organization. In doing this, however, I beg most clearly and unequivocally to disavow all the usually received doctrines of materialism, as regarding the spirit after death, a fixed hope in the survival of which is never absent from my mind; but in this purely medical enquiry, I imagine it can cause no disturbance of religious

faith to consider it thus, and distinguish the terminable vital principle, or ζωη of the Greeks, from the interminable ever-living soul which liveth after death.* Having casually in my Essay on Phthisis Pulmonalis, alluded to the permeability of the nervous fibrillæ, and the circulating nervous fluid, distributed from the nervous fount to all portions of the animal frame, I shall merely here reiterate the circumstance, and add, that such is a fact, admitted by most physiologists, of which, however, there is no direct evidence, but of which there exists little doubt ;† that this secerning

* For a very excellent illustration of this view of the mind or intellect, and the soul or immortal spirit of man, see a very able paper in the 2d. vol. of the Bath and Bristol Magazine, subscribed T. B. H. Teignmouth, in reply to a scientific paper in No. vii., vol. 1st., signed T. A.

† For the verification of this now almost generally admitted doctrine, see Beclard's experiment of the divided nerve.

apparatus however secretes or eliminates different nervous fluids, or fluids capable of different effects in the system, according to their distribution, experience testifies. We find one set of nerves supplying sensation—another, motion; yet each distinct and palpable, the operation of each only is inscrutable as they move in the same fasciculus. We have nerves of volition, and nerves of animal life, all proceeding from one great centre; one grand emporium and manufactory of nervous influence, but of the internal working of which we know nothing. We know the nervous system is of all systems the most essential to animal life. We know that it is the fountain of life. Why, then, do we not consider the fluid it secretes as life? When it is destroyed life termi-

nates. When it is oppressed, consciousness or mental life ceases, but it does not follow that the soul or immortal spirit ceases; if so, we must suppose that a born idiot is incapable of salvation, as never having had an intellect or mind, which is contrary to religion and humanity. It is the same organ, the brain, which produces physical activity and sufficiency, and mental vigour, and in proportion to its developement, are both demonstrated. The phrenologists evidently conceive it so; for they apportion to different parts of the organization different productions or sentiments. It is the directing medium of life, if it is not life itself; for in operation we can conceive none greater, unless we can imagine some fine etherialized aroma, some vital es-

sence which directs that, and of the existence of which we can have no evidence.

That certain portions of the cerebral mass preside over or eliminate certain mental impressions, the observation of ages testifies. To the posterior or cerebellic portion, the animal propensities and functions are attributed, and to the anterior portion of the cerebral hemispheres the elimination or creation of mind or thought is ascribed; and that the developement or preponderance of one over the other produces a corresponding mental or physical state of excellence, experience proves; likewise that they are generally in antagonism, and that one is cultivated at the expense of the other.

The phrenologists aver that no pro-

pensity, either animal or mental, is fully developed, without a corresponding cerebral or cranial manifestation, and this I am not altogether prepared to deny ; and yet, in their minute subdivision I am also equally unprepared to admit it. They even go so far as to say that the cultivation of an inferiorly developed faculty, even after the period of puberty and consequent ossific maturation, will produce a cranial manifestation, under culture, but this, notwithstanding the cases adduced, I can scarcely conceive.

In considering this part of my subject, I shall not stay to consider any of the old theories of life, its resemblance to electricity as long believed, nor suppose the brain a voltaic battery, as some have done, but expressing my convic-

tion, that imagination or mind is a cerebral secretion; an immaterial product of a material organization; how eliminated and vitallized, I do not pretend to guess,* I shall now examine its effects on the body, in health and disease.

In bodily health, then, we see the mind enjoy a corresponding vigour and activity; we see the temper even, and the passions subdued; we see fully illustrated the observation of the Roman poet—

"Mens sana in corpore sano,"

and we find the just balance preserved, and each mutually assisting and supporting each other. Change the picture,

* This view of the subject, of the distinction of mind or intellect from soul, and the resemblance or identity between mind and nervous secretion is almost confirmed by the experiments and observations of animal magnetizers, whose otherwise incredible assertions it renders comprehensible.—See Colquhoun's Isis Revelata, &c.

and see the result—let the balance fall on which ever side it may. Let the healthiest individual in existence, gifted with the most equable placid mind, be suddenly told of the ruin of his worldly prospects; the death of his best beloved friends, and any other unwelcome communication, and see the effect on his physical frame. What an immediate stagnation of the circulation of life it produces; see even the subsequent effects: fever produced, digestion suspended, and actual disease set in. And, why is this? many will say, what has the mind to do with the body? 'Tis all a delusion; the disease would have manifested itself just the same if no mental impressions had been effected; the seeds of it were already in the system. To which I answer, no. The disease was

essentially the product of the mental impression ; the seeds of it had no need to have been in the system before, and it was the effect of organic disturbance, as unquestionably as if it was produced by vascular over excitement. Of this I could produce innumerable instances. I shall adduce one as an example. Returning from a professional visit late one evening, I was met by a medical friend, who begged me to see with him a gentleman whom we both had previously well known, stating that he was in a deplorable state, and wished to see me. I at once consented ; and we walked on together. " You have, of course," said he, " heard of his unfortunate accident ? " I said, " I had heard some vague reports of his having shot some gentleman accidentally."

"Alas!" said he, "that was not all; you must remember him one of the handsomest young men in the University." I said, "yes." "Wait until you see him now; he is truly a victim to mental distress; his form is reduced to a skeleton, and his strength scarce that of an infant's. The circumstances are these:—He was spending the shooting season at his uncle's at ———shire, when his cousin, to whom he was much attached, about his own age, and an only child, irritated him by some frivolous remarks, while on a shooting excursion; words ran high on both sides, and they being only attended by a little boy of ten years old, who could not interfere, a struggle ensued, in which the poor victim we are going to see, shot his cousin on the spot.

He then returned, scarce conscious that he did so, to his uncle's house, and detailed the event, from the effects of which, within a month he saw his uncle and aunt carried to their graves, while he exists, a miserable wreck, soon to follow them."

Such as he was described, I found him ; his hand was hot and feverish ; his cheek pale and withered, and his frame a perfect skeleton ; his voice was deep and hollow, and his expression agonized and wretched; yet he complained of nothing. It was clear that his nervous circulation was suspended; yet his thinking principle was awake, and consciousness alive. The mental or nervous stimulant was withdrawn, having by the shock of the accident been directed into another channel, which

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was necessary to keep in activity the animal functions, and a general stagnation ensued, until exhausted nature sank from inanition. Such is the case in many instances. You see as it were a sudden withering up of the external form, accompanied with a suspension of the animal functions, under strong mental affliction. Thus it is in sudden and violent shocks, when the entire impulse is overwhelmed. When it is more partial without any previous disease or apparent disposition to it, it is no less curious. In the Medical and Surgical Journal, of May, 1835, a case is recorded as having happened in France, in the practice of a M. Diez, a French Surgeon, of a lady who is designated as Madame G., aged 24 years, whose lips and mouth became suddenly

enormously swollen, from having seen a child of a few years old, pass the sharp blade of a knife between its lips, without even cutting itself; which intumescence it required the usual applications to subdue, and which is represented to have had an appearance similar to that produced by the sting of a wasp, or some other poisonous insect, which there was no possibility of having occurred. This case is curious, as the organ affected was the same as the one for the apprehension for which in the child, the nervous horror was experienced. How nature acted in this case, it is of course impossible to suppose; we may say with the Homœopathics, it was by a sympathy of resemblances, but this elucidates nothing. If the nervous shock had produced a stagnation of

the circulation, and a suspension of vitality, it would have been what so many have experienced, that they suppose they can comprehend it; but it is not one jot the more comprehensible. And yet if we look at mental determination, considering it synonimous with nervous influence, we can, I think, make some progress towards its elucidation. For instance, a similar intumescence is produced by an inserted poison, as the sting of a bee, &c. That inserted poison or any other, will not act upon the vascular system, so exciting it to throw out lymph to produce the intumescence, without first acting on the nervous system ; as is demonstrable by the pain produced. The pain is felt before the intumescence takes place. It is not, as in ordinary cases of inflam-

mation, when the vascular dilatation or vesicular infiltration produces pain, by pressing on the nervous fibrillæ. In this case the pain precedes the intumescence ; and consequently, depends upon nervous irritation, or irritation applied directly to the nerves themselves. In the case of Madame G., however, we have no evidence of pain having been experienced at all. And this may constitute the difference between a transmitted mental impression or irritation, and a locally supplied one, although the appearances are the same. I have myself, both in my own person and in practice, known frequent instances of mental shocks, producing various and peculiar effects upon the animal functions. Morgagni mentions two remarkable instances of jaundice

produced by such a cause, and many others are on record. Who has not occasionally felt under mental impressions, palpitations, the sudden eruption of perspiration, the suspension of digestion, the "steteruntque comæ, vox faucibus hœsit" of Virgil, &c.? I have myself known the total and sudden withdrawal of milk from the breasts of a nurse, by the accidental death of her child; and numerous instances of the interruption to the catamenial and lochial discharges; and many cases are recorded of the operation of medicine being suspended by a similar cause. A case is recorded by Van Swieten, of a girl having been attacked by an intermittent fever, from her having been frightened by a mouse, to which he seems to give full credence. And a case something

similar, occurred recently in my own practice, in which an elderly lady received an organic disease of the heart, which terminated her existence, from the functional disturbance produced in that organ by a similar cause. John Hunter mentions a case of a gentleman who was seized, and afflicted for weeks, with all the symptoms and horrors of hydrophobia, from having been bitten by a dog, which he supposed to have been mad, and the view of which animal, sound and well, alone restored him to mental and bodily health, after weeks of suffering. But I need not multiply instances, they are familiar in various degrees to every one. That some are more susceptible of such impressions than others, I am ready to admit. That the detailed circumstance

which happened before the eyes of the French lady, would not have produced that effect upon most others, mentally or physically speaking, I am willing to suppose; and assuredly the approximation of so innocent and familiar an animal as a mouse, would have little effect upon nine-tenths of the community; still that such nervous constitutions exist, I cannot doubt. I am myself acquainted with a gentleman, a strong-minded man, as it is called too, whose aversion to cats is such, as to have almost an intuitive perception of the approach of one, and to be liable to be actually thrown into convulsions at the contact or even the approximation of one. These effects and endurances of prejudices are generally looked on as the result either of edu-

cation or mental deficiency; and as far as the existence of prejudices is concerned, education has, in most cases, much to do with it; but it is not always to blame; there is undoubtedly a peculiar nervous distribution which renders some men more susceptible of certain impressions than others, and the utmost reason can do in these cases, is to examine the justness of the apprehensions and dislikes, and distinguish the well-founded, from what is otherwise. That it is a peculiar mental or nervous constitution, we see demonstrated every day. We see it elucidated not only in the difference of mental and bodily developements, in the different sexes, and in the same sexes, but we see it in the same individuals at different times, and in proportion as the physical powers

are in a state of more or less sufficiency, are the mental susceptibilities affected. We shall consider this more fully when we come to speak of the influence of the state of the animal functions over the mind. I have thus spoken of sudden mental shocks; sudden violent disturbances of equanimity. I shall now speak of it where it has been more gradual, and where the effects are also more gradual, but not the less, in consequence, discernible. In this consideration of my subject, however, I wish not to enter into a disquisition on the passions, Hope, Fear, Disappointment, Anger, &c. I look on them all, as part and parcel of the subject under discussion, as different directions of the one great faculty, and consequently not to be individualized. In my Essay on

Phthisis Pulmonalis, I have related a case in which tubercular pulmonary disease was by the patient himself attributed to mental action. The case is one, which from the circumstance there detailed, we may draw a fair inference that it was so. That I have seen many such, I think I may conscientiously state. I shall now speak of the minor affections or delusions which over mental application will produce, the unhealthy state of the faculty from over excitement.—This is discernible for the most part in literary individuals, in the history of whose lives we find many instances of it recorded, particularly amongst those engaged in compositions of an imaginative character. That the over exertion of the imagination should produce a diseased state of the faculty is natural

enough to be supposed; and, as I have already shown in cases of violent mental shocks, where the withdrawal of mental determination or nervous supply, has produced a cessation of the animal functions, the same is observable, although in a modified and lesser degree when the withdrawal is voluntary. It is a common observation, that studious people are generally attenuated, that the animal functions are impaired, and that in fact, life could not be carried on without an occasional mental relaxation.—All medical men know that the diseases of literary studious people, are indigestion, torpidity of the bowels, and their consequences; most attribute those affections to the bodily inactivity consequent on their pursuits. It is not however so, it is to the constant mental de-

termination to other quarters that it is to be attributed, which does not admit of the due direction of it to those functions to which it is so essentially necessary at particular times. That this is effected unconsciously and unintentionally by the individual is no argument against it. If a mental impression destroys the appetite, the digestion, and even the operation of medicine, as we all know it does, we must fairly conclude, that that mental application was, however unconsciously to us, engaged in that operation prior to its withdrawal by external accident; for instance, nobody is capable of thinking deeply when digestion is going on; or if he does, he interrupts that operation, proving that the nervous influence cannot be at the same time engaged in the

double capacity. The best illustration of this is in the erotic passion, in which the withdrawal of attention destroys capability; no one feels hunger, &c., when mentally engaged, &c., and vice versa.

A curious instance of mental influence over the bodily functions has lately been communicated to me by a medical friend of an eminent medical practitioner, remarkable for great intellectual endowments, and some peculiarities. It is one in which the extraordinary power of mental determination is discernible, and, in this case as a curative agent. Dr. S. all his life had the greatest horror of taking medicine, although admitting fully the beneficial and necessary effects of it, and constantly prescribing it judiciously for others; he con-

sequently never took it. After a certain period of life, however, he began to experience a torpidity of bowels, and all the consequent uneasinesses, rendering it apparent to himself that relief could only be obtained by the means he prescribed to his patients, namely the taking medicine. After due deliberation accordingly and conflict with himself, he decided upon taking some; and imagining that an ordinary dose of salts would answer all the purposes, and be less nauseous than most others, we carefully mixed one, and laid it by his bed side at night, to be taken in the morning, when he first woke. The proximity of it, however, and the impression on his mind of the horrible dose which awaited his first waking, banished sleep from his eyes, and kept it continually before him.

At length, however, he did sleep ; and even then, the vision did not leave him ; but like the haunting phantom of the roasting pig to the slumbering glutton, it assumed various guises and positions to his mind ; the difference alone being that his was more purely imaginary, as he had not swallowed the cause of the mental disturbance, which the other had ; but suffered from the anticipation. At length, however, he awoke ; and so far from requiring the prepared medicine, found all occasion for it removed, by an effort of nature; and from that time he declares that he has nothing to do when suffering from torpid bowels, but to lay a dose by his bed-side at night, and that it as effectually acts, as if he had swallowed it.

Most eminent literary men, either

had, or are supposed to have had, some mental peculiarities; which, perhaps, distinguished them as much as their writings. Even Sir Walter Scott, the most temperate of all who have gained fame in modern days, admits that his imagination has occassionally played truant after long exercise, and presented groupings which it required the utmost effort of judgment to dispel.* That Napoleon, Lord Byron, and Shelley were subject to hallucinations, is uni-

* See the 1st Chapter of his Demonology and Witchcraft; in which several curious cases are recorded of mental delusions, all of which, as well as those of Doctors Ferrier and Hibbert, appear to me to be confirmatory of my view of the identity of mind or ordinary intellect with nervous secretion. For instance, Nicolai, the German bookseller, traces his delusion to a series of unpleasant incidents, which made him neglect a course of periodical bleeding, thus by permitting cerebral congestion, deranging the machinery of the brain, and so affecting its secretion. The blue devils of the drunkard, the *Corps de Ballet* of the young roué, and the patient of Dr. Gregory, were all affected in the same way. It was the material organ was in fault, and its immaterial elimination was consequently deranged.

versally known; and that Napoleon, in the excess of his vanity and presumption, believing himself a peculiar object of care to the upper world, allowed himself to admit the thought of those visions being communications from the world of spirits, his superstition testified. That an overstretched imagination, like an overstruck musical string, (to speak metaphorically) should continue to vibrate, and afford action after the intended impulse had ceased, we can easily conceive. Let any one, however ungifted with a taste for the marvellous, or, as phrenologists say, unendowed with the organ of wonder, make the attempt, and he will quickly perceive how much farther his delusion will carry him than he expected.—This weakness is not confined to wo-

men of a certain stamp, and to children; but let any one, however great his confidence may be in the strength of his nerves, listen to a well-told ghost story, amidst certain peculiarities of situation, at midnight, and then see how far he would be disposed to look for the ideal being which has been conjured up, in the locality where it was represented to be found. A story is told of a wag standing opposite Northumberland House, in London, and after attracting attention, by appearing to be wrapt in some mysterious observation, unconscious of the crowd which gathered round him, at length slowly breaking forth, as if to himself,

"It moves, it moves, by Heaven it moves!"

What moves? the tail, the lion's tail, it moves; where? where? I see, I see,

so do I, so do I, rang from many in the crowd; and thus, by his fixedness of gaze, and accuracy of acting, coupled with their ignorance of his intention to deceive, he actually sent many home, convinced in their own minds not only that the tail of the bronze lion did voluntarily move, but that they saw it with their own eyes.—Such is the excitability of the imagination.

That the exclusive cultivation of the mental powers is inimical to the physical developement and well-being, I think I have shewn; and that even the undue exercise of it, or sudden awaking of its activity, is pernicious, more or less in proportion to its suddenness and violence, I have likewise endeavoured to prove. I shall now consider the influence of the body or animal functions over the mind or imagination.

That the *corpus sanum*, then, is as necessary to the *mens sana*, as is the *mens sana* to the *corpus sanum*, the experience of every day evinces. The ancients believed that a diseased state of the biliary secretion, or black bile, as they called it, produced melancholy; that a certain affection of the spleen produced vapours, &c.; and unquestionably their observation it was which induced them to account thus for what they believed, although their anatomical knowledge did not enable them to ascertain the seat of the disease more correctly. When Aristotle believed and taught that the seat of intellect and feeling was in the heart, and Van Helmont in the stomach, it is natural to suppose that their followers should have attributed all unusual mental emotions to those organs,

and conceive that their state of perfect health was necessary to mental consistency, and to the same conclusions we are often now compelled to come, admitting the source of the affection, but accounting for it differently. Thus we see the equanimity of the temper disturbed by the diseased state of the stomach; hallucinations and visions produced by visceral derangement,* and a whole host of mental afflictions caused by indigestion, &c.; still we don't attribute the seat of life one atom more to these organs. In actual disease of the tissues, as in inflammatory fevers, we find often extraordinary wanderings of

* In this way drunkenness acts; the effect is first produced on the villous coat of the stomach by the imbibition of ardent spirits, &c.; the poisonous portion of which is communicated to the brain by the recurrent nerves; and thus, like putting fine sand into the machinery of a watch instead of oil, it interferes with its action, and alters its secretion.

the imagination, a setting up of extravagant phantasies and delusions, which bear no connexion with the individual's feelings and desires in ordinary life.*

Being perfectly, myself, opposed to the idea of mental disease, independent of a physical cause, although not always able either to ascertain the seat of it, or even the nature, not merely during life, but by the most minute anatomical examination after death, I have often wished that a record was made in large public establishments of the most frequent and peculiar delusions which have existed in those diseases. It would, I doubt not, effect much towards their

* I have often known this to be the case in patients recovering from fever; a remarkable instance of which occurred in my practice lately, of a gentleman who, for weeks after the subsidence of the acute disease, was under the impression that he had a large sum of money in his banker's hands, which he ultimately found, to his regret, to be untrue.

elucidation, and perhaps, in time, serve to point out the tissues affected. I do not mean in chronic affections, as actual insanity, but in the ordinary acute attacks, as in worm fevers in children, phrenitis in adults, delirium tremens, &c. Hypochondriasis has always been looked on as an affection of the mind alone, independent of physical disorganization, and, as its name implies, supposed to have its seat in the hypochondrium, or portion of the person beneath the ensiform cartilage, which includes the principal seat of digestion, as the bulging extremity and pyloric orifice of the stomach, the duodenum, opening of the hepatic ducts, &c., but this is not so; the source of the mental affection is there, doubtless, but still it does not include the idea that the mind, or

perceptive apprehension of that affection, is situated there.

The mind is, in this instance, affected through the medium of the body, by the transmission of communications, by conducting nerves, which pass equally backwards and forwards, mutually conveying intelligence and impressions.—That this is so, the commonest observation manifests, not merely from the internal organs, but from all portions of the external body; in this way ingesta act, the reception into the stomach is not enough; there must be a corresponding impressibility in the cerebral organization, before the perception is awaked,* and likewise in the external.

* The inactivity of stimulants and narcotics in cases of excessive mental distress and excitement evinces this. I once administered to a lady one hundred drops of laudanum, under peculiar circumstances, without the smallest narcotic effect—to which medicine she was totally unused.

If two persons, sitting at table, agree to consider the pressing of the foot of the one by the other a signal for a certain train of thought or argument, the pressure of the foot in the prescribed manner immediately awakes the mental feeling and recollection ; but, if in the mean time, the individual whose foot was to have been pressed, has had an apoplectic seizure, so obstructing the nervous permeability by effusion and pressure in the brain, and, consequently, the conveyed impression from the remote organ, the signal is not understood. The mind does not receive the intelligence, and respond to it, and the agreement is overthrown, Or, even suppose that no apoplectic seizure had taken place in the mean time, so as to destroy general consciousness, but that

hemeplegia had existed, which the impressing individual did not know, and that he pressed the paralytic limb, the same result would be the case; the pressure would cause neither a topical, nor mental impression, and so produce no corresponding idea, or train of ideas in the mind. But why need I recur to remote explanations? It is in this way the senses, as they are called, act. In Amaurosis, the eye is perfect; yet it does not see; and yet the light passes equally through the different lenses to the retina; but it conveys no idea to the mind. Its nervous permeability is obstructed; for no one, I believe, now supposes that the retina is itself the manufacturer of the ideas derived from external nature by the sight; but the mere collector and conveyer to that

portion of the brain, allotted by the great Architect for such fabrication. Consequently, I say, its nervous permeability is obstructed, not that its power is destroyed.

I shall now consider the mind or imagination as a source of cure, and as an agent equally potent, and as frequently used for the removal of corporeal malady as I have shown it to be active in its production.

If we look then into the history of man and his machinations, from the most ancient times, to our own enlightened days, shall we not find it all a grand record of deceit and delusion, of ingenious device and credulous folly? In civilized life, at any rate, we may look on the human race as divisible into two great divisions, the Deceiving and

the Deceived; and the great agent of both partitions is the Imagination. In the smaller or deceiving portion of mankind, it is the imagination which supplies the ingenuity to contrive, and in the larger or gullible many, it is the same faculty in excess producing credulity, which leaves them open to deception. That the best gifts can, however, be converted to the worst purposes, is no argument against their value. It is, doubtless, the most valuable department of mind, as the main organ of intelligence.

That the imagination does much in removing, as well as in producing disease, is apparent from those remedies, which, in the dark ages, as well as in our own enlightened times, have gone

under the denomination of specifics. That the minds of the ignorant and unenlightened should have readily grasped at any source of relief to their multifarious maladies, after comprehensible means had failed, is easy enough to be conceived; but when in this intellectual age we see the same thing occurring, the same draughts made and accepted on credulity, and this not amongst the weak and ignorant, but nearly equally amongst the wise and learned, it may fairly make us cry out and enquire, what is the source and cause of all this? In ancient times, armed with an amulet, a devotee would not hesitate to enter a pest-house, or rush into an embattled host, or amidst a raging fire, and preserved, as he supposed, by its influence, return un-

scathed. And whence came this protection, for such undoubtedly did come? Think not the cunning devisers of such delusions knew not their agent? As a proof of it, they selected for the materials of their amulets the most rare and beautiful articles; precious stones, which, from their beauty, were supposed to be the residence of spirits and genii, and aromatics, exquisite from their perfumes, &c. Physicians in those days, too, as we learn from Van Helmont, were not above dealing in such things, but operated upon the minds of their patients by philtres of supposed extraordinary virtue, and unaccountable operation. And is that delusion over? Have the spirits deserted their crystal abodes, and ceased to take an interest in human affairs? Is the active opera-

tion, as well as the tranquillizing effects of inert medicines, less than formerly? None, I think, who read the accounts of the Homæopathics, will say so. The same agent still acts in the 19th century as generally and potently as in the days of Machaon and Podalirius*, but the application of it is different; rational men no longer believe in the power of dæmons, nor resort to the royal touch for the cure of Scrofula; but do they the less shut their eyes to voluntary delusion, and disclaim deception? The progress of quackery establishes the contrary. If we were now to tell a patient, labouring under a severe attack of Neuralgic Rheumatism, that drawing slowly over the part, with certain mystical movements of the hand, a three-pronged

* The two sons of Æsculapius.

iron fork, coated with sealing-wax, would cure him, he would doubtless consider it as an insult to his reason and resent it as such; and yet we know that such was done, and pretty extensively too, by Mr. Perkins and his Metallic Tractors, and with, as I doubt not, decided good effect. That the virtue did not, however, reside in the magnetism or any other property of the tractors, Dr. Haygarth has evinced in his work on the use of the fictitious tractors, in which he has shewn that sticks of sealing-wax, pieces of wood, keys, &c., have had precisely similar effects to the genuine Perkins's tractors, when substituted for them without the patient's knowledge; and in this the influence of the mind or nervous fluid is distinctly shown, and their identity established;

for often, under the use of the fictitious tractors, which of course could have no virtue in themselves, he has witnessed instances in which the determination of the mental or nervous influence, under this strong delusion, directed to a paralyzed limb, has enabled the patient to move that limb which had been before perfectly dead to feeling and motion; nay, in some instances, the patients perceived a sensation as if an unusual fluid was permeating or forcing its way along the limb, and, as this took place, feeling and motion was for a time restored. The same has taken place in paralytic people, under strong sudden mental apprehensions, as in the well-known case of a gentleman in London, who, after having been bed-ridden for years, on the cry of fire in his house, jumped out of

bed and rushed down stairs, perfectly active for the time; but the paralysis returned immediately after the strong mental effort was over. Many similar cases, in a minor degree, are on record; and every one is aware how much the different senses are sharpened by mental attention, the operation of which is the same. The same nervous determination it is which thus sharpens a healthy sense by a voluntary effort, which by an excess of that impulse, restores power to a paralyzed limb. All physicians are aware of the value of having what is called the confidence of their patients, that is, having their minds or imaginations disposed to a belief in the efficacy of the means used for their relief, and in the intellectual capabilities of the administrator of them; thus affording a double

power to the physician in the effective agency of the medicines used, and the determination of the nervous or mental influence of the patient; and without this full confidence, no honest practitioner should continue to attend, as, without it, with the utmost effort of intelligence and practical acumen, he will find himself so hampered in his resources as to be unable to accomplish his own wishes and expectations, and experience universal discontent follow his best exertions.

Such is imagination, in its full and comprehensive interpretation, in health and disease, and as a source of disease and cure, in all of which states I have endeavoured to consider it, I shall now conclude by a few observations on it, as a subject of education, in a moral and

medical point of view; and exhibit a few instances of the mischief which has resulted from its neglect in both capacities.

The Imagination, then, being the active principle of mind or intelligence, it necessarily follows that, on it hinges, in rational life, the bias or determination of the individual's mortal existence; on its culture and direction in youth, depends the misery or happiness, the virtues or vices, of after life. How many thousand instances do we see of this in the profligacy of our own times; of the sad results of evil communication and perniciously excited inclinations and passions? How many yearly fall victims to tastes originated from others, to desires innocent at first, and almost unfelt, yet roused into excess by excite-

ment, become the source of crime. We see this occur equally in both sexes, yet in some individuals more readily than in others, without any additional early indication of depravity of disposition, but from a greater excitability of imagination, which artifice leads on until habit reconciles crime, illustrating those beautiful and expressive couplets of the poet Pope—

> " Vice is a monster, of such hideous mein,
> That to be hated needs but to be seen;
> Yet, seen too oft, familiar with his face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

In his romance of the *Bravo of Venice*, Mr. Lewis has made one of his professors of the assassin-trade thus address a Neophyte:—

" Fool! know, the bravo must be above crediting the nurses' antiquated tales of vice and virtue. What is

virtue? What is vice? Nothing, but such things as forms of government, custom, manners, and education, have made sacred; and that which men are able to make honourable at one time, it is in their power to make dishonourable at another, whenever the humour takes them. Had not the Senate forbidden us to give opinions freely respecting the politics of Venice, there would have been nothing wrong in giving such opinions; and were the Senate to declare that it is right to give such opinions, that which to-day is thought a crime, would be thought meritorious to-morrow. Then, prithee, let us have no more such doubts as these. We are men, as are the Doge and his Senators, and have reason as much as *they* have to lay down the law of right and wrong, and to alter the law

of right and wrong; and to decree what shall be vice and what shall be virtue. Perhaps you will tell me that our trade is *dishonourable!* And what then is the thing called *honour?* 'Tis a word; an empty sound; a mere fantastic creature of the *Imagination!* Ask, as you traverse some frequented street, in what honour consists? The usurer will answer, 'To be honourable is to be rich; and he has most honour who can heap up the greatest quantity of sequins.' 'By no means,' cries the voluptuary; 'honour consists in being beloved by every handsome woman, and finding no virtue proof against your attacks.'— 'How mistaken!' interrupts the General; 'to conquer whole cities, to destroy whole armies, to ruin whole provinces; *that*, indeed, brings *real* honour!'

The man of learning places his renown in the number of pages he has written or read; the tinker in the number of pots and kettles which he has made or mended; the Nun, in the number of *good* things which she has done, or *bad* things which she has resisted; the coquette, in the list of her admirers—and the Republic, in the extent of her provinces. And thus, my friend, every one thinks that honour consists in something different from the rest. And why, then, should not the Bravo think that honour consists in reaching the perfection of his trade, and in guiding a dagger to the heart of an enemy with unerring aim?"

With such delusive sophistry is many an innocent being led on to ruin; and many a mind, worthy of better results, induced by bad example and misapplied

confidence, darkened into crime, and dimmed in disease and death.

In a medical point of view, it is no less worthy of culture, nor less prolific of results. We see this every day illustrated in the prejudices and delusions which even reflection and experience cannot overcome, and which, indulged, often render life miserable. In a misdirected exercise of this faculty, do we not frequently see the train laid of permanent disease—hurling reason from her throne, and engendering the most horrible conceptions? This we observe most in the encouragement of the developement of the passions, the excitement of enthusiasms, as it is called. Thus we have religious madness, love madness, &c., all the result of excitement, which a misdirected zeal has awakened—feel-

ings and longings aroused to insanity, which a temperate education, and fostering judgment, might have restrained within the limits of reason. Such are my views of the Imagination; many of which, I fear, my readers will not agree with me in; they will all, however, I hope, subscribe with me in this sentiment of Virgil's—"*Spiritus hos regit artus.*"

FINIS.